

A detailed black and white illustration of Niagara Falls, showing the water cascading over a rocky ledge and creating a large, turbulent pool of rapids below. The scene is framed by a dark, leafy border.

MEMORIES *of* NIAGARA.

BY
G. W.

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BRIEF MEMORIES OF NIAGARA,

Its Rapids, Falls and Whirlpools.





SLAVE AT A FRIENDLY WAYSIDE HOUSE.

(Frontispiece.)



... *Brief* ...

Memories of Niagara.

Its Rapids, Falls and Whirlpool.

By G. W.



LONDON :

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Memories of Niagara.

CHAPTER I.

THE SURROUNDING COUNTRY.

THE word *Niagara* means “thunder of waters,” and is a most fitting name for this far-famed river. The sound of its stupendous falls may be heard, like the roar of thunder, even at the distance of many miles, and the presence of the cataract creates in many those feelings of awe experienced by some in a thunderstorm. The scene is one of overpowering majesty and grandeur, which increases with acquaintance.

Before occupying ourselves with the different parts of this world-renowned river, let us look for a little at the *country* which surrounds it.

Niagara is a North American stream, flowing

from one of the Great Lakes, and emptying itself into another. From near the Prairie Region in the far west, to the Atlantic on the east, the continent of North America is traversed by a steady flow of fresh water to the ocean.

There are five immense sheets of fresh water, connected by rivers and straits. These inland seas are called "The Great Lakes," and are named respectively: *Superior*, *Michigan*, *Huron*, *Erie*, and *Ontario*. The link between the last two is the river Niagara. The river St. Lawrence is the outlet from Lake Ontario, to take the vast quantity of fresh water to the Atlantic. These lakes are very deep, and the largest of their kind in the known world.

The eastern part of the United States of America, lies south of this great water boundary. Canada possesses the northern shores of this chain of water, with the exception of Lake Michigan, which is altogether American.

The States and Canada are both really American, because forming part of that continent. But for the sake of distinction, we speak of the former only as such, when the nation, and not the continent is before us, hence, the American side of the Niagara means that bank which forms part of the State of New York.

The name Canada is said by some to be derived from "*Acá nada*," two Spanish words, meaning "nothing there." When the Spaniards saw this land so different from their own, they thought nothing could be obtained there, and saying "*acá nada*" they turned away. Others however state that the name comes from "*Kanata*" an Indian word meaning a collection of huts.

Canada belongs to the British crown. People from our own shores have made their homes there, in addition to a French population, to whose native country it once belonged. Though many who speak warmly of "the old country"

have never seen the British Isles, yet they are a loyal people to our honoured Queen.

The people of the United States form an independent nation now, but only since throwing off British rule. Before that date (1776) both sides of the Great Lakes belonged to England. The country therefore as a British colony, was peopled by an English-speaking population, and, though the colonial days of America are over, there still remains between it and the mother country the common bond of one language.

Near the famous Falls of Niagara, stands a little American town of the same name. It derives its importance from being near the cataract and other interesting parts of the river. Looking as any other town of the kind would do, it has made little impression on my mind, but a few facts, in connection with it, were of interest to me. I refer to the subject of slavery, of which my young reader may like to hear a little.



Stealing people for slaves.

There is a large population of dark-skinned, or black people, in America, called *Negroes*. Many of these have been born in that land, but as a people, they do not belong to America. Their forefathers were brought from tropical lands, to till the soil and labour hard in a foreign country. They were suddenly, and without any warning, carried off from their own homes, placed on board a ship, and thus stolen away.

The cruel men who did such deeds, considered these negroes as their own personal property, to sell or use in any way they desired. Many a poor black child, happy on the coast of Africa, found himself or herself thus suddenly deprived of freedom.

In America, these poor negroes were made to work hard without receiving wages, and dared not leave the master who owned them. Such was slavery, and such the black man's lot!

This state of things went on in America for

many years after it had thrown off English yoke. Now, happily for the United States, slavery is a thing of the past.

In days when this cruel trade was in full force, many a slave ran away, with the fond hope of gaining freedom. Canada, as belonging to England, was then, as now, a free country, and if only the slave could set foot there, his master was powerless to re-capture him.

To reach that friendly shore at its nearest point, the water must be crossed, and some miles below Niagara Falls was the place whence the river-boat sailed from the American to the Canadian shores. To reach this spot before the owner could find him, was the runaway slave's desire and aim.

From the States in the south, where the negroes were largely employed, to the Niagara river, was however, too long a journey to be accomplished unbroken. Different houses on



A Slave resting by the way.

the way were known to be favourable to the runaway slave. The locality where these kind people dwelt, was therefore whispered from one slave to another, in the land of their bondage. When the fitting moment arrived for escape, the slave fled and hid himself till darkness favoured his onward journey. The thick forests near formed suitable hiding-places, and were often used as such. Sometimes the escape was quickly discovered, and the cruel bloodhounds sent on the track. By this means the poor slave was often caught, and carried back to his master to receive more cruel punishment than ever. Running water prevents dogs following the scent, the slave's aim therefore generally was to cross a river as soon as possible.

When the fugitive succeeded in getting over the first danger, his efforts were then directed to being able to reach the nearest friendly house. There tremblingly the negro would knock at the

door in the darkness of the night, and find a hearty welcome. The needed food, rest, and shelter were obtained; and after daylight had departed, the master of the house would pass on the runaway slave to the next friend's house.

These places on the way, formed what was called "The Underground Railway," each residence being looked upon as a station. The friend in whose house I stayed during my short visit in the town of Niagara Falls, told me of many slaves whom he had thus helped on their way. His house was called the last "station" on the friendly "railway." This gentleman's part was to shelter the slave in the daylight, as did the others, and like them, lead farther on.

It fell to his lot to take the negro to the steamer which would lead the fugitive to the land of freedom. When conveyed to the opposite shore, the negro was no longer a slave, but a free man in a land of liberty.

Do we not see in this the picture of a saved sinner? He was a slave to sin, pursued by Satan, but is now delivered by Christ; and in Him set free for ever, from the cruel bondage which held him fast?

As truly as the poor negro belongs to his master, so really is the sinner in the cruel bondage of Satan. And who is a harder master than he? Deluding his poor victim with present gratifications and the prospect of more, all he insists on is delay. And alas! how many there are, who thus by his allurements, put off the day of salvation till they are beyond the time of grace, and awaiting judgment! Poor fettered soul! would *you* be free? Then turn to Christ, He will bring you forth from Satan's cruel bondage, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. That which sets the sinner free, is believing what the word of God says about his state, and what it tells of Christ Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. "Ye

shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

"He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside : there's not a chain
That hellish foes, confederate for his harm,
Can wind around him, but he casts it off
With as much ease as Samson his green withes.
He looks abroad into the varied field
Of nature ; and though poor, perhaps, compared
With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
Calls the delightful scenery all his own.
His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
And the resplendent rivers. His to enjoy
With a propriety that none can tell :
But who, with filial confidence inspired,
Can lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
And smiling say—' My Father made them all !'
Are they not his by a peculiar right ?
And by an emphasis of interest his ?
Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy ;
Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind
With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love,
That planned and built, and still upholds a world !"

COWPER.

CHAPTER II.

THE PEOPLE ON NIAGARA'S BANKS IN FORMER DAYS.

HAVING told you a very little of the country and the people now on the banks of Niagara, I should like to refer to those people who lived there before either the English or the French did.

When Columbus and others first set foot in America, it was thought that the New World might be part of India. Hence, they named the savages which were found on this new land, "Indians." They have also been called Red Men, because of their copper-coloured skins; they are now spoken of as *Red Indians*. These savages were to be found all over the continent of the two Americas.

The Red man is not particularly tall, yet he looks so, because he carries himself very erect. He has a square head, which is flat at the back, and his forehead is broad and low. He is of slender build, has dark deep-set eyes, high cheek-bones, and thick lips. The women are short and stout. Both men and women have small hands and feet. Some are gentle and inoffensive, but others are thieves and murderers. Many are being carried off by consumption, and others by the abuse of strong drink. The latter has been brought to them by the white men who have visited their lands. That hateful traffic is now forbidden, and well for the poor Red Indian that it is so. The race is already fast dying out, and ere long that people will have gone, leaving only their name and history.

No European tourist ever gazed upon any of America's wonders, in the days when the home of the Red Indian was an unknown land. No



A Red Indian Chief.

English tongue or voice was heard on Niagara's banks, nor admirers from distant lands, to return and tell of its grandeur. From forest to forest, and from bank to bank, the wild Indian roamed afar at his pleasure.

The canoe of the red man was a common sight skimming the watery surface ; while a little hut in the forest told of his home-life. His hut was called a *wigwam*, his wife a *squaw*, and his children *papoose*. He lived by the chase, and saw in the buffalo, the elk, or the antelope, only food for him and his. Hence the Redskin cannot understand why the white man should kill such animals, when he does not require the flesh for food.

Now that his country is in the hands of the white man, the wild forest and broad river are no longer free to the Red Indian ; so that he cannot fish where he may, and hunt as he was wont. It is a sad day for the poor Indian, and

so he mournfully says, "White man come, buffalo go; when buffalo go, squaw and papoose die."

To make up for what has been taken from them, the Government has given grants of land to the various tribes of Indians in North America. These are called "reservations." There the Red-skin is expected to till the ground, and sow his corn like the white man. But it does not suit his taste; for he is a hunter by nature, and thinks that work is a degradation. It is always a difficult task for a savage to make a complete change in his way of living, to suit those who have conquered him.

The Indians who formerly lived in North America, are called the *Iroquois*, and this term includes five nations. It was they who gave to Niagara the expressive name which it bears. A relative of mine went to see one of their reservations, some miles below the town of Niagara Falls. Wishing to see those who had professed

Christianity, he found his way to their little meeting-room. The congregation had not yet assembled, but about a dozen Red Indians were seated there. The men were dressed in the ordinary costume worn by Europeans. Some women were there also, who had likewise laid aside their native style of dress. They had found more scope for the showy taste of the savage to be seen, and therefore had a very gay appearance. All were singing in a very touching way, the following well-known English hymn :—

“ There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That Saviour in his day ;
And there have I, though vile as he,
Wash'd all my sins away.

E'er since, by faith, I saw that stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Lord, I believe Thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought, free reward,
A golden harp for me.

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years,
And form'd by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but Thine."

Thus sang the Christian Indians at Tuscarora, where the sweet melody, and yet sweeter words, were refreshing to the ear and pleasant to the heart. They had Bibles printed in their own language, which they had learned to read. Some of their words are very long, having as many as fifteen letters, but the syllables sound soft and melodious when uttered by these Indians.

What a marked contrast was this to the past,

when the poor Indian knew nothing of God, save by his own wild traditions ! Then everything in nature was for him an object of worship. Instead of seeing God as the Creator of all, it was the things which He had made that became his god. The tree which bends to the wind, the river as it rolls along, the flowers that lie at their feet ; all are objects of reverence to the unchristianised Iroquois. Yet they have a glimmering of the truth when they believe in "The Great Spirit," and connect death with their sacrifices. But their mode of worship is far from being in keeping with it. For they understand not, that the great Spirit needs nothing from them, and that the precious blood of Christ has been already shed. The contrast between an Iroquois of the past and a Christian Iroquois of to-day is therefore very great.

In former times his body was gaily painted, while the bright feathers and red blanket which

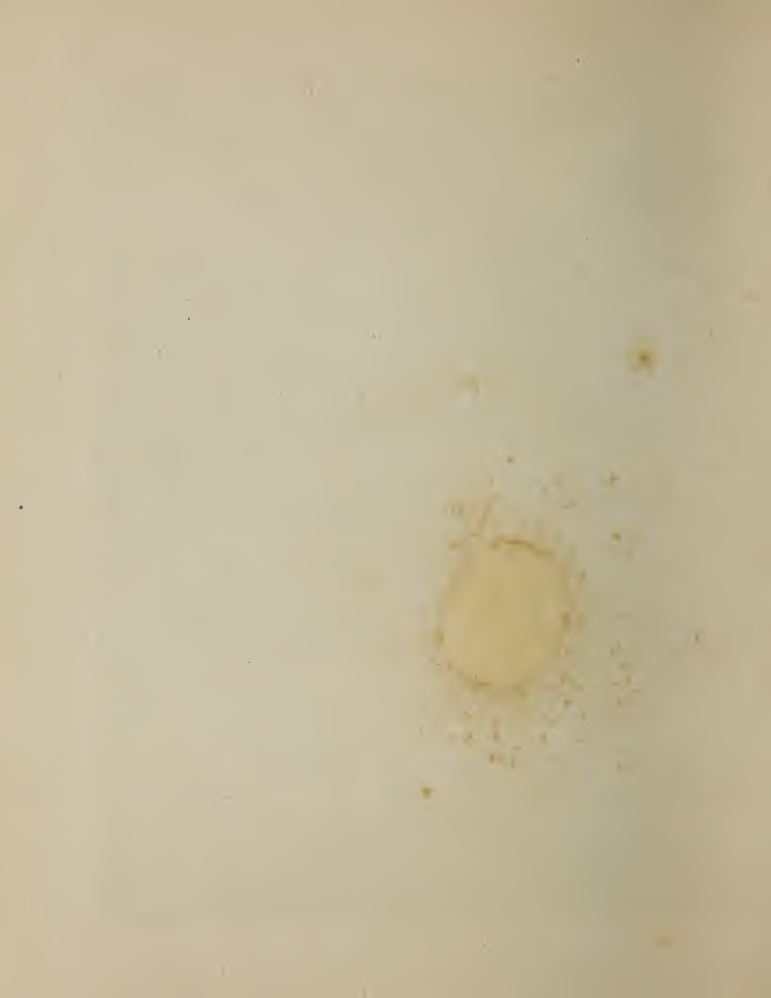
formed his clothing, gave him quite a different air from the present. Now he has the Word of God in his own language, and he is taught to read. And though he mourns over the hunting-days of the past, he hears the sweet story of the cross as he never did then. He thinks of the happy days when life was nothing without his bow and canoe; yet he has a brighter scene spread out before him now. Instead of a plurality of gods, he hears that there is only one God. Instead of slaying his fellow-man and calling himself a "brave" because of the blood he sheds, he now learns from the Word of God the awful character of sin.

Whether the Red man profits by all this, is his responsibility; but whatever he may regret in the past, the present is a more privileged one for him.

So the Christian Iroquois may sing for joy, when his wondrous theme is the precious blood



Indian's Winter Hut.



of Christ. For he knows that a heavenly country lies before him, instead of the dreamy spirit-land in which he once believed. Then he expected that his horse, and his hawk, and his dog, would be with him in the life beyond. Now he is taught that the future bliss is far above his earthly thoughts, and that there will be neither need nor desire for the things so loved here. For the Word of God in his own native language, tells him of a blessed living Person who will satisfy every desire of his heart in the world to come.

A lady who gave her time and life in seeking to help these Indians, once told me some striking facts. Her delight was great in carrying the gospel and teaching them to read the Bible. But there were times when the Redskins from a distance came in all their native clamour for blood. One night they howled and yelled around this lady's lonely dwelling, till she feared every

moment to be at their mercy. For it would have been quite like these wild warriors, to set fire to the house and inmates where an entrance was denied.

We who have been born in this free and civilised England, know little how to value our many privileges. The Lord Jesus when on earth, uttered some solemn words over a city whose inhabitants had rejected Him, when He said, "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you." (Matt. xi. 22.)


Let *us* see to it that *we* may truthfully say with Paul in 2 Corinthians iv. 6, "For God who hath commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." For it is possible for the Red Indian to be pressing into the kingdom of God, while many in Christian England are heed-

less; and may hear at last the mournful words from the lips of the now rejected Christ, "I never knew you."



CHAPTER III.

THE UPPER COURSE OF THE RIVER, AND RAPIDS.

HE Niagara river is about thirty-six miles long, and varies greatly in breadth and appearance in its outward course. On leaving Lake Erie the stream is three-quarters of a mile broad, but it afterwards widens to at least four times as much. For some distance all is calm and quiet, and Niagara pursues an even course like any other river. For sixteen miles it can be crossed by boats, and the usual traffic of any stream of the kind can be carried on. While the river runs that distance it is comparatively shallow, and the incline much less than it afterwards becomes. The average depth is about twenty-five feet, and the descent of its bed only twenty.



Prospect Tower and Horse Shoe Fall.

The numerous islands at this part of the stream rather impede the way across; but notwithstanding this, it is often and easily crossed. Farther down the stream, there are islands near enough the American shore to be reached by bridges. Others farther into the river are thus connected, one to the other. On each side, the eye is delighted with the stream and its banks in different aspects. Vegetation is plentiful, and principally consists of the pine and cedar woods which abound in North America.

For some distance, the bed of the river seems smooth as it spreads out its waters to a greater width. All is therefore quiet and calm; and the eye is met by one broad expanse of water, miles in extent. As the stream flows onwards, it becomes very distinctly affected by the character of the bed over which it passes. Ripples begin to play on its smooth surface, telling of something beneath that disturbs.

These gradually increase, till, on every side, the waters dash in wild commotion. The narrowing of the stream, the rapid incline, and the rocky bed, all combine to make that vast body of water one scene of wild unrest. For the sudden descent and narrowed space, only give to the volume of water greater depth and increased rapidity. In pushing its way onwards, the water is dashed about hither and thither in the rapidity of its flow, breaking the clear transparent water into snowy foam.

Rocks lie beneath the surface, or raise their dark heads above; while over and around whirl the restless waters. And between, deep currents rush rapidly on unhindered, carrying with them everything which comes into their resistless power.

For over a mile the river thus rushes on, and the wide expanse is one scene of foaming, surging, seething waters. Hither and thither they dash,

and rest they know not; for onward, ever onward, are they hasting to the cataract. And nought on earth could stay the rapid and unceasing flow of those drifting currents and eddying waters. For two miles and a half the river contracts till the falls are reached. Immediately above the falls, the descent in the river bed is between fifty and sixty feet in a mile.

As the waters approach the edge whence they are about to take their mighty leap, they become calm and quiet, though resistlessly impelled onward. The white crests fall back into the waters, the rocks have ceased to disturb, and the bottom is slippery as glass. Such are *The Rapids* above the Falls, that is on the upper part of the river before its sudden break.

The whole length from Lake Erie till this point is reached, makes twenty miles of the river's course.

So widespread are Niagara's waters, that in a line with the Rapids all is still and calm towards the shore. I proved the quiet state of the water on the Canadian side for myself, by driving through it a few paces. Passing the Horse Shoe on the western bank, we had come to a bend in the river, only a little way up. There the stream comes close to the wooded bank, and is so shallow and safe, that a child might wade in it. Yet that part of the stream, in common with every other, is on its way to the cataract. With the reins in hand, and the horses' feet passing through the water, it seemed strange to be in Niagara's waters yet not in danger.

It may seem surprising that the river, so soon to dash with terrific speed over that precipice behind us, should have been so calm and quiet. The shape and character of the river make it easily understood. The ground at that part was flat, and therefore the water seemed scarcely

moving onwards. It was simply a little of the stream covering the land; but still, quiet, and safe as the bank which it gently laved. Nor was it within the power of the irresistible force, which was impelling forward, with such fearful rapidity, the water in the middle of the stream, to cause more than a ripple to disturb it.

May we not learn a moral lesson from this trifling fact, and see whether it has any bearing upon us? It makes one think of the mighty power of the world through which we are passing. We are indeed part of that great living stream of men, women, and children on their way to eternity. No earthly power can ever stay the onward flow of life to the grave and the tomb. And beyond, there exists the untrodden eternity, where "every one of us shall give account of himself unto God." Such is the end of the things of time; and we form part of the stream. Yet, like the calm edge of the river, we may be in it, passing onwards too;

but not in the turmoil and tumult of the wild waters. The believer is in the world, yet not of it; just as those waters by the banks of Niagara belong to the river, yet partake not of its general character. Side by side with the tumult and unrest of the pleasure-seeking and the careless, the happy child of God possesses a quiet unbroken peace.

Yet all are passing onwards, saint and sinner, from the present to the future. Every drop of water, unless taken from the stream, must go over the precipice. So unless the Lord take His people from time to eternity without dying, there is only one end for both. Death lies in the way, and only divine power can save us from passing through it. But its bitterness is gone since Christ has died; and for the soul who trusts Christ, it is only the way by which it enters into a fairer and brighter scene. He will come forth ere long to claim His own; they who are alive

upon the earth, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Thus from time's fast-flowing stream, the believer may pass to glory; while the same continuous flow will carry the unsaved onwards to destruction. Which will it be with the dear young one who reads these pages? Is yours the place of unrest, or is it perfect peace? Remember that it is the present which decides the future. Your eternity will be perfect happiness or untold misery, according as you are Christ's on earth or not. There is no moment of which you can be sure, but the present; therefore hear the living Word, which says, "Now is the day of salvation."

"Passing onward, quickly passing,

Yes, but whither, whither bound?

Is it to the many mansions

Where eternal rest is found?

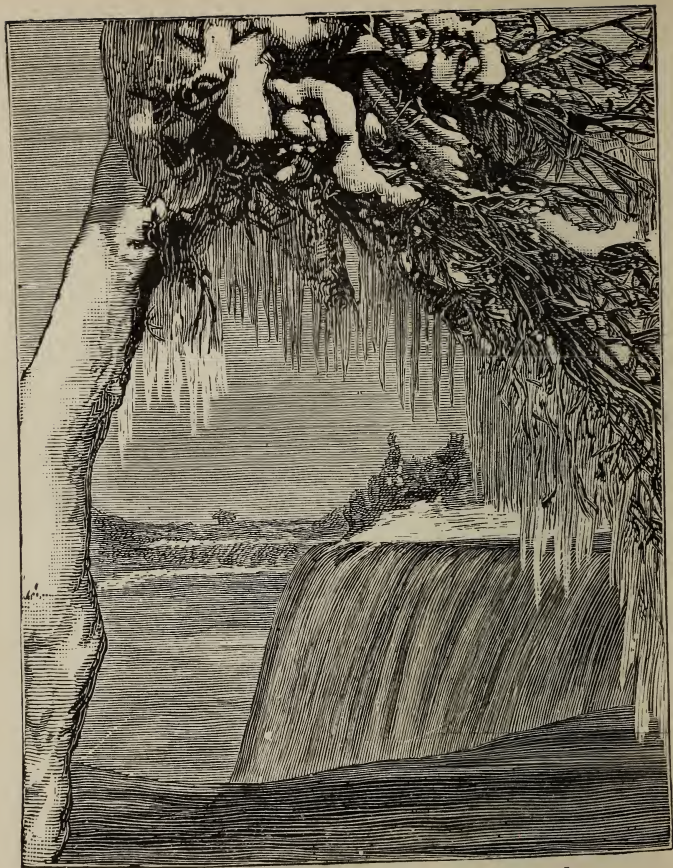
Passing onward—

Yes, but whither, whither bound?

Passing onward, quickly passing,
Nought the wheels of time can stay !
Sweet the thought that some are going
To the realms of perfect day ;
Passing onward—
Christ their Leader—Christ their Way.

Passing onward, quickly passing,
Time its course will quickly run ;
Still we hear the fond entreaty
Of the ever gracious One :
Come and welcome—
'Tis by Me that life is won."





The American Fall in winter, from Luna Island.

CHAPTER IV.

ISLANDS AMID THE RAPIDS.



NUMBER of islands may be seen scattered here and there in the midst of the wild waters above the falls. Some can be reached by bridges, but all are not thus accessible. Those which are connected with the mainland, lie nearer the American than the Canadian shore. They are therefore only reached from the American side.

The nearest is *Bath Island*, which is joined to the mainland at the town of Niagara Falls, by a bridge which spans the rapids lying between. It seems in a very dangerous position, but has proved to be quite safe for many a year.

Another bridge leads from Bath to Goat

Island, and is about one hundred yards from the American fall. Beneath it rolls the angry torrent in all the tumult of the rapids.

This beautifully wooded spot, thus reached, is only about a mile round. Above it the stream has been flowing in all its power and greatness. Around it the waters have parted, and on each side wild rapids are rushing. The steep rock which is the abrupt ending, and may be called the foot of the island, forms one side of the hollow which receives the falling waters. On each side they are pouring with one long incessant roar; and long have they done so, in the many centuries of the past.

It was on the evening of a hot July day, that I first set foot on Niagara's islands. And well do I remember with gratitude, the welcome coolness and shade afforded by Goat Island. With the soft breeze from those far-extending waters, and the absence of a scorching sun, the

shady walks seemed to me most welcome and timely.

From Goat Island, a third bridge leads one to a little spot still further into the stream, called *Iris Island*. The latter is close to the edge, where the main body of the stream begins to fall. From this point, for over a third of a mile, one vast extent of falling water stretches to the Canadian shore.

Gull Island is far out into the river, and possibly on it the foot of man has never trod.

There are three beautifully wooded spots in the midst of the raging flood, called *The Three Sisters*. A very pretty picture they form too, from their position and the vegetation which covers them. *Navy Island* lies near the Canadian shore, and *Ship* and *Big* Islands are near the American.

But of all these islands which stud the river's surface, the largest is *Grand Island*. It is twelve

miles long, and from two to seven broad. The stream is about two miles and a half where it washes the lower part of Grand Island. From that point, it begins to narrow suddenly and give rise to the rapids.

Goat Island is the most important, because by it Niagara is separated into two parts. It so diverts the water towards the eastern bank, as to cause it to flow and fall at right angles with the larger part of the stream.

This eastern branch has another little islet, lower down than Bath Island, and very near the ledge whence the water falls. It is called *Chapin's Island*, in memory of a workman who was saved by being drifted there. The story is an interesting one. But before relating it, let me note the position of another little isle, still lower down.

Luna Island is not so much above the falls, but is situated where the water has begun to leap

the precipice on the American side. Hence it can only be reached by going down below the level of the edge whence the waters are falling.

This is accomplished by descending a few steps at the foot of Goat Island, and then crossing a wooden bridge on the right. The water is thus seen falling on every side; and in the rising spray, beautiful rainbows are there formed. For the sun's rays have the same effect, seen through this medium, as through rain.

I did not like the idea of that frail-looking bridge, nor did I care to be so near the cataract, and see the waters heaving beneath while it poured from above. I was content to see the islet from Goat Island, and missed the sight of its rainbows for the sake of a more solid footing.

Niagara's islands altogether, form a beautiful feature in that grandest of water scenes. Their waving trees amid the wide watery waste, give a sense of quiet beauty in the turmoil.

When crossing to one of the islands, the following story was told to me by one who lived in Niagara.

A painter was sitting on the outside of one of the bridges which span the rapids, painting part of the woodwork. The only way in which he could do so, was in that position. The man was thus overhanging the water, while holding on to the bridge with his left hand. He was perfectly safe, thus seated and clinging, while his right hand held and used the brush. By some slip, however, the painter lost his hold, and fell into the water below. Happily the bridge is at no great height, so that the fall, as such, was not more than a few feet. But the current was strong, and the poor man was speedily impelled onwards by the rushing water. Death only seemed before him, and yet it was the will of God to save this life. The painter was drifted by a current on to a rocky islet, and on that he was able

to gain a footing out of reach of the restless waters.

The painter's danger was seen from the shore, and it was a glad surprise to see him reach that rock in safety. And now to succour and deliver one in danger of death, was the great desire of the spectators.

Preparations to save the man were immediately made, and carried out most eagerly. A boat was sent to the rescue, which must have been secured in some way to the land. A distinct link was thus formed between the man on the rock and the onlookers. The result was a saved life; for the painter was safely brought to shore, none the worse for what he had passed through.

It is said that a drowning man will clutch a straw, so eager is he to save his life. One curious point in this case was, that while struggling in the water, the painter held tightly to his brush.

Having it in his hand when he fell, there it was held fast when all need for it seemed over. I was told that this man was a believer in Jesus, so that had he died thus suddenly, it would have been to exchange the sorrows of earth for the joys of heaven.

As I gazed on the scene before me, and listened to this story, other things and higher thoughts crowded in upon my mind. The raging flood around seemed to speak to me of death; the struggling man as a lost sinner in its power; and the firm and solid rock pointed to Christ the Saviour, with the shore of eternity full in view. Every reader of this little incident is like that drowning, or that saved man. Which is *your* position? Are you still in the power of death, and passing swiftly to destruction? or are you on the Rock, and for ever safe? Death is as sure to the sinner, as it would have been to that living man had not the rock been reached in time.

For "All have sinned," and "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

It was by the mercy of God that a place of safety was granted, for the man did nothing towards making it for himself. Scripture says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done; but according to his mercy he saved us." (Titus iii. 5.) That man found life and safety as he rested on yonder spot of dry ground amid the watery waste. So the believer has eternal life and a firm abiding-place, because linked up with the risen Saviour.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

In a believer's ear !

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,

And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,

It calms the troubled breast ;

'Tis manna to the hungry soul,

And to the weary rest.

Blest Name ! the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding-place ;
My never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus, my Saviour, Shepherd, Friend,
Thou Prophet, Priest, and King ;
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring."

NEWTON.



CHAPTER V.

AMERICAN SIDE OF NIAGARA.

REMEMBERING that Goat Island diverts the flow of the river, you will now think of Niagara as in two parts. One branch (the larger of the two) flows towards the *western* or *Canadian* side, and the other to the *eastern* or *American* shore.

Each has its own rapids, and preserves the same general character. But that towards Canada bulges out somewhat towards the shore, thus making a wider channel for itself than the other. It is the larger part of the river, and carries with it the greater volume of water.

Thus divided, the stream pours on for a short distance, till a sudden gap occurs in its channel. Instead of a sloping narrowing bed and a rushing

river, the edge of the precipice is reached, and the whole volume of water leaps over it into the deep hollow below. But ere this point of the river comes before us, let us follow for a little the smaller branch as it bends around Goat Island.

Bath Island lies in the middle of it, and to this spot a bridge leads from the mainland at the town of Niagara Falls. Thence by another bridge Goat Island is reached. Then a short walk in the direction of the flowing waters which have just been crossed, brings one to the rocky ledge over which the river descends.

It was from this spot that the first impressions of that wondrous scene of grandeur broke in upon my soul. Behind me on my right, was the river, making the rapid incline of fifty-one feet in three-quarters of a mile. The rapids sending the waters on in their fury, broke their white foam over the flowing stream. Then near the edge, a

momentary calm in the wild scene; and with one bounding leap forwards, the mighty cataract had dashed itself into the still wilder waters below.

And not for once only is the mighty feat accomplished, but never for an instant do the waters cease; and moment by moment witnesses an incessant flow. As one stands beside that continuous fall and roar, the river through eye and ear becomes truly overwhelming in its irresistible impulse onwards and downwards.

Looking forward over the precipice by which I stood, instinctively I shrank from the abyss below. For one hundred and sixty-four feet, these waters were pouring wild and fast; and far down in those depths, beyond human sight, the thundering cataract fell. One deep wall of water, only the side of which could one see, seemed to go down, down, down; and the boiling surge below was all the eye could rest upon in following its descent. It was a relief to look

beyond that great chasm with its rolling, heaving waters, three quarters of a mile in width, and see the steep rocks of the Canadian bank, telling of solid ground.

It is possible to go lower down than the point from which the stream descends, and cross by a bridge to a small rocky islet which separates the falling waters. It is thence that beautiful rainbows are seen in the rising spray. One stream of water is thus slightly separated from the greater part of the American fall. But it is a very slight separation compared with the whole width of the river, which at this part is about one-fifth of a mile. And this is the extent of the American fall.

It is considerably narrower than the Horse Shoe, but falls from a height which is fourteen feet greater than the other. There is no bank rising from the edge of the stream at Goat Island; but the smooth slippery channel over which the

water flows, may be touched by hand or foot. So near are those shallow waters as they glide by one's side with a steady onward flow, that their presence makes one shudder to think what would be the result of a step or two taken within their power.

The spot is perfectly safe, so long as nothing foolhardy is attempted. Standing there I heard a sad story, shewing the folly of playing in the presence of death. A pic-nic party had gone to the island, and some, or all, had come to this point, as is usually done, to see the American fall. It is said, one young man in play caught up a little girl in his arms, and pretended to put her where she would be thrown over. The child struggled in great fright, and the young man lost his balance. The immediate consequence was, that both were hurried over that awful precipice into the yawning gulf below !

Thus was death brought to both in an instant,

when little expected. Certainly that young man, in his mirth, never dreamt that he was about to end the life of a little child in that dreadful way, and his own besides. The dead body of the little girl was thrown on a rock below, where she was seen lying on her back with her parasol in her hand.

Such was the sad tale of death told to me as I stood by the spot where it occurred. It made one feel how truly it is only by the power of God that others are kept from doing similar deeds. Death is not a thing to be trifled with; and he who exposes himself to it, ought ever to have a lawful reason for doing so.

Another solemn story was related to me at the American fall, but as I do not remember all the details, I shall only mention what I do.

By some means, a man had got into the rapids on the American side. At what point, or how, I cannot tell; but he was at the mercy of the

water, hurrying on to the fall. He was drifted to a rock, whether on a raft or bodily in the water, matters not; there he was in danger, with death before him. A boat was sent to his rescue, which no doubt would be secured by the spectators on shore. When it neared him, he sprang forward to grasp it, as the means of deliverance so kindly offered.

Poor man! he fell short of his mark; and instead of being able to get into the boat, he plunged into the water. Onwards he was hurried, and as he realised the shocking death before him, his agony was most heart-rending. Rising to his full height where the water was so shallow as only to cover his ankles, he threw up his hands in despair, and the next moment was hurled over the awful bank.

One may wonder how death can be so inevitable where the water is not deep; but the sloping, slippery channel, and the powerful current,

combine to make it so. In the case of that poor man, we have before our minds one almost *saved*, yet *lost*. The story of the painter in a former chapter, was one almost *lost*, yet *saved*. If the one taught a lesson of safety and security to the believer in Christ, the other may also afford us some moral teaching.

There was a way of deliverance near, but the man missed it. The boat would have taken him safely to shore, but he was never in it. Kind friends were looking on, willing and ready to give every aid. But all in vain, they could not grasp the boat for the man ; and safety only lay in his laying hold of it for himself. It was he who was in danger, and if he failed to grasp the deliverance given to him, death only could be the result.

We do not, and could not blame the man for missing the boat : but we see in it a striking illustration of what is going on daily around us.

Are not souls passing onwards to the tomb, missing the one Way of deliverance from the power of death? Christ is near, speaking in the sure and solemn words, and no one need say that *He* is out of reach. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Thus spake the Lord of life, shortly before He stooped to die, that He might conquer death. If men die in their sins, it is because they put away the Holy One who would save. And the blessed Lord risen from the grave, still offers Himself as the Saviour to the sinner. But alas! He has often to say now as He did while on the earth, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life "

"The Father sent the Son,
A ruin'd world to save;
Man meted to the sinless One
The cross—the grave.
Blest Substitute from God,
Wrath's awful cup He drain'd ;

Laid down His life, and e'en the tomb's
Reproach sustain'd.


The Lord shall come again !
The Conqueror must reign !
No tongue but shall confess Him then,
The Lamb once slain.
Jesus is worthy *now*
All homage to receive ;
Oh ! sinner to the Saviour bow,
The truth believe !"





CHAPTER VI.

THE MIDDLE OF THE FALLS.

HE great and sudden break in the channel of the Niagara river extends across both branches, and includes one side of Goat Island in the middle. Two falls being thus formed, the steep side of the dividing island runs down to the hollow below, in common with the whole rock of which it is a part. There, the green of vegetation clothes the rocky side, while on each hand stretches the vast extent of falling waters.

Passing from the American fall by Goat Island, to the islet of the name of Iris, one seems to be standing in the midst of the wild waters. Yet comforting was it to feel the feet resting on solid

land, where everything around seemed moving. From this island to the Canadian shore, the larger cataract extends.

The rock bends in towards the middle in a curved form, something like the shape of a horse's shoe. Hence the name of the *Horse Shoe Fall* is given to this, the greater cataract of the two. One side of the Horse Shoe washes the Canadian shore, and the other, more than a third of a mile from it, touches the side of Iris Island. It was from this spot that I stood to gaze on that wonderful, ever wonderful Canadian fall, for the first time.

So near does the descending water come, that it was falling close by my feet. Shallow indeed it is at this point, but powerful to carry everything before it which may be in the power of its current. There one may stand and gaze around upon a varied and wondrous scene. On looking up the river, the eye is met by one vast expanse

of water, rolling rapidly towards the spectator. The verdure of the islands, the turmoil of the rapids, the deep green of the water, and the snowy foam upon its surface, has each its own peculiar beauty. Then the strange momentary calm which settles upon the advancing stream immediately before it leaps into the chasm below; and the eye looks round to follow the waters in their plunge.

And now, with one's face in the direction of the stream in its downward course, an entirely different view of the most imposing kind meets the eye. Standing in a line with the broken channel which causes the cataract, the edge of the falling water is close by one's side. For Iris Island is only part of the bed of the river too high for the waters to cover, round which they have naturally turned, as is the case with every island. And so it is that those bold rushing waters are leaping the precipice at one's feet.

Nay more, they are within reach of the touch of the hand or foot.

On this spot, by the inner edge of the Horse Shoe fall, a tower once stood. It rose forty-five feet above the cataract, in that seemingly perilous position. The best view of the different parts of Niagara was said to have been got from the top. I should have thought such a sight obtained almost at the risk of one's life. However, many went up and came down safely, and I never heard of any lives being lost there. It was called *Prospect*, or *Terrapin Tower*, and had been removed before the time of which I write.

With the wide stream behind, the Horse Shoe on one's left, and the islands and American fall curving round to the right, the spectator seems in the middle of the waters, yet is not in danger. In front lies a great chasm, deep and wide, and into that the waters of both parts of the river are passing with an unceasing roar, moment by

moment. And then, as the stream dashes down to the depths below, it foams, and surges and looks as if boiling in wildest fury. As the descending waters meet the surface of the deep below, and the broken rocks around, the white spray which they throw up rises like a cloud and hovers above. This great natural basin which now receives and re-unites the river, rises between one and two hundred feet above the edge of the water. Its width from the American fall to the Canadian shore, is about three-quarters of a mile.

Let the position of the American branch of the river be remembered, so as to know the place where it falls into this immense basin. It so curves round Goat Island, as to find its way to the side of this great hollow. Hence, instead of falling in a line with the Horse Shoe and the western bank of Canada, it bends to the right of the former, and is opposite to the latter.

It is thus that the little isle reached from Goat Island, seems to give one a foothold in the middle of those falling waters. Behind, before, on the right hand, on the left, the river in its varied phases may everywhere be seen. And down in the far depths below, it rolls onwards in a gorge deep and narrow for such an immense volume of water

That which makes Niagara unique among the falls of the world, is the vast quantity of water which it carries. In this, no other cataract can vie with those two. It is that added to the unusual width, which gives such an overwhelming sense of majesty and power in this torrent of water. Many are disappointed at first because the fame of Niagara has been spread far and wide, and people come expecting to see they scarcely know what. We speak of the falls as being of great magnitude, and so they are, but they do not always appear great at first sight. The

immense width makes the body of falling water look as if falling from a lower height than it does. For me, I went prepared to see less than I did, because of the accounts of others, and the consequence was, that I suffered no disappointment. When first I gazed on that magnificent Canadian fall from my standpoint on Iris Island, I felt as if I had no words of my own to utter. But my heart and lips could say with David in Psalm civ., "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all."

Man feels small in the presence of such an overpowering object; but the heart which knows God in Christ, delights to acknowledge the might and majesty of the Creator. And oh! what grace, matchless and infinite! is that which meets the sinner in his sins, with the record of divine love instead of the awfulness of judgment. For when one gazes on the stupendous works of creation, the soul which is taught of God,

learns how puny and powerless is our humanity, which could be crushed in a moment like a moth. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." We have indeed earned death, and could only be set free from its power by the dying of a perfect man. And yet sinners have to be entreated to believe such a statement, though written in that Word which endureth for ever.

" How swift the torrent rolls
That bears us to the sea !
The tide that bears our thoughtless souls
To vast eternity !

Our fathers, where are they,
With all they call'd their own ?
Their joys and griefs, and hopes and cares,
And wealth and honour gone.

But joy or grief succeeds
Beyond our mortal thought ;
While the poor remnant of their dust
Lies in the grave forgot."

DODDRIDGE.

“The Lord of life in death hath lain
To clear me from all charge of sin ;
And Lord, from guilt of crimson stain
Thy precious blood hath made me clean.


And now, a righteousness divine
Is all my glory and my trust ;
Nor will I fear since that is mine,
While Thou dost live, and God is just.

Clad in this robe, how bright I shine !
Angels possess not such a dress ;
Angels have not a robe like mine—
Jesus, the Lord's my righteousness.”



CHAPTER VII.

BELOW THE FALLS.

 HERE are two ways of crossing to the Canadian side of Niagara from the American shore. One is by descending the steep banks of the re-united river, and being rowed over in a small boat. The other is by the suspension bridge, which spans the river nearly two miles lower down. That bridge is a wonderful construction ; but to describe man's work there, is not our present object. The height of these rocky banks, and the width of the stream at that part, may be gathered from the fact, that the suspension bridge is half a mile from pier to pier, and two hundred feet above the water. To look

down and around, makes one feel very small and powerless, when thus exalted in the air, high above the rushing torrent.

The ferry is two or three hundred yards below the falls, and that is, by far, the easier and nearer route, by which to reach the Canadian side of the Horse Shoe. But though near, the strong sense of risk and danger would deter many from trusting themselves to the stream at that point. As the waters from the two cataracts fall in immense volume, they go direct to the bottom of the great hollow. Then instead of suddenly rising to the surface, they flow on beneath for some distance. After the turbulence caused by the cataract is over, the stream is comparatively calm. A very strong current, great depth, and a channel continually narrowing, make it by no means the easiest thing to reach the opposite bank in a boat. Strong men undertake the task, however, and seem to do it very

easily. Those who have crossed, have hitherto done so in perfect safety.

While thus on the river below, a most magnificent view of both falls is obtained from the boat. Far and wide extends one great stream of falling water, with only Goat Island's rocky side between. The rising spray, the surging of the river directly beneath, the height whence the sparkling waters are leaping, all seem to have increased immensely, and continue to do so the longer we look. It was under a sky of cloudless blue, that this splendid panorama burst upon my astonished gaze. Over the green waters, the frail boat was tossed, and around were spread those crystal walls, while the brightness of a July sun lit up the scene in gorgeous beauty. But withal, the *terra firma* of the opposite bank was very acceptable indeed to me, at least.

After ascending the rocky path to the height where the Canadian cataract is bounding, one

may go down the bank again and follow a path a little way up the river. This leads, behind the falling waters, into a kind of cave naturally formed. Some pass in as far as the rock goes; but my little experience was simply to stand a few steps within the wall of water. The stream bounds forward as it falls, leaving a clear space between it and the rock; and the latter has been scooped out by the water. My position on that little path of rock was not in the least alarming, even to the point at which the falling water was on my left hand, and the rock behind it on my right. As the great glittering torrent swept downwards by my side, it was a comfort to feel that though near, I was out of its resistless force and power. It was enough to stand between that sparkling wall on the one side, and the hard rock on the other; and then to leave the spot with that little scene impressed upon me.

Pieces of rock get loose and break off, and

thus some favourite spots of the past no longer exist in the present. Such is the case with *Table Rock*, a place of great interest in days gone by. It was, as its name implies, a flat piece of rock, something like a table. It overhung the bank on the Canadian side, quite near the edge of the Horse Shoe fall, and therefore nearly opposite the American one. It was a place where people often stood to look upon the surrounding scene; for its position commanded the best view in those days. But Table Rock is seen no more, as once it was in former times; for it is years since it split away from the bank, and was dashed into the chasm above which it hung. It was doubtless part of the Horse Shoe in the long forgotten past, before the fall had reached its present position.

These rocks have been breaking and falling during centuries that are gone, and will probably continue to do so in the future. The action of running water is ever powerful, though it may

be slow. In the case of Niagara, the volume is so great, that it exerts great pressure. The very ground trembles with the mighty power and force of the flood. Besides, the rock is of a kind which easily yields to the action of water upon it. In this way has the cavern, called the *Cave of the Winds*, been formed behind the mighty cataract. There is sufficient rock to form a path, by which people pass from one side to the other. As the great body of water falls forward fifty feet, there is considerable space between it and the bare hard rock.

Bender's Cave is another hollow place; but that is in the bank, and not in the bed of the stream, like the former. It is between one and two miles below the falls on the Canadian side. This cave is twenty feet long, and six high.

Down the river, about four miles from the falls, another hole has been made in the rocky bank. But that is filled with water to the depth

of a hundred and fifty feet. The size is about two acres. With that point, there ceases to be anything further remarkable in the river.

Few things illustrate one's life better than a stream ; and we may gather a brief lesson from the end of this one. Many a change has it seen in its course, many a difficulty got over : and now it nears the close of its history as a river. It is the same rushing water which flows calmly on, and will soon be lost in the comparative quiet of Lake Ontario. But there it loses its name ; for its waters mingle with those of the lake and no longer bear the name of Niagara. Calm and placid is the stream as it enters the lake ; and as the rushing, rolling river, we know it no more. But is Niagara gone ? No, onward it flows, incessantly onward, for none but God could stay its course. We have simply followed its moving waters, and in imagination have been going down with the stream to its end

in the lake to which they have been hurrying. May you and I, dear reader! learn to fulfil the purpose for which God has called us into being; just as the noble river answers to its Creator's object in making it! It knows nothing, but we do; and it is only as we are in Christ, and know Him, that we shall answer to what God would have us be. Yet, on earth, amid all its tumult and its sorrow, the soul passes happily onward, and at last enters calmly and placidly into rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God."

"There's beauty on the mountain,
In the valley, on the hill;
There's beauty in the torrent,
In the gently running rill.
But greater far the beauty
Than all around I see,
The beauty of my Saviour
Is beautiful to me.

There's gladness in the sunbeam,
As it scatters every cloud

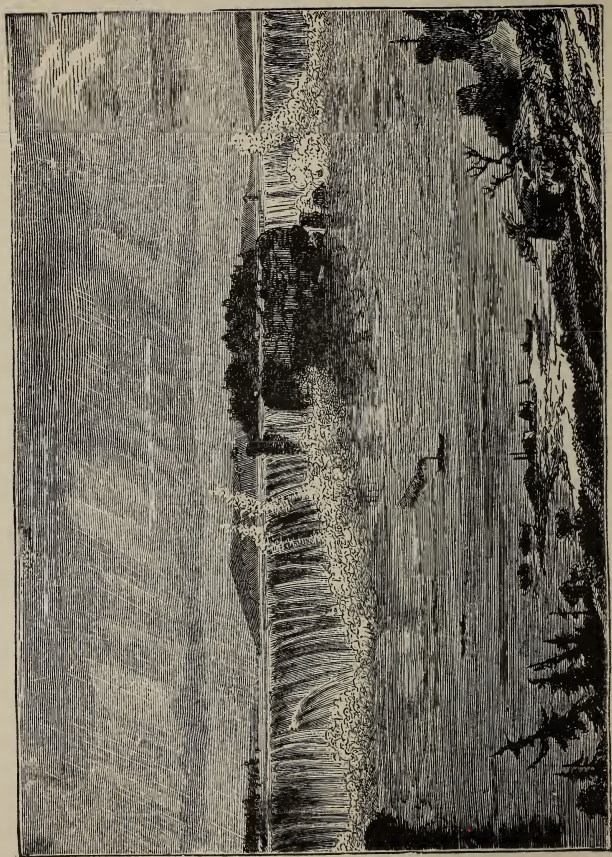
That had gather'd o'er the landscape,
Like a dark and gloomy shroud.
But oh ! what gladness here,
Compared with His can be ?
The gladness which He giveth,
Is gladness now to me.

There's peace upon the bosom
Of the softly flowing lake ;
The world's unceasing murmur,
Its stillness cannot break.
But deeper far His peace,
Who died upon the tree ;
The peace which Jesus giveth,
Is peace indeed to me.

Each tells its Maker's story
In everything around ;
His light, and life, and glory,
In everything abound ;
In nature's vast resources,
No tale so sweet can be,
As that I read on Calvary,
Of Jesu's love for me."

F. WHITFIELD.





CHAPTER VIII.

THE RAPIDS AND WHIRLPOOL BELOW THE FALLS.

NIAGARA below the falls, presents a very different aspect from the river a few miles above. The channel of the stream is that which alters its character, though the latter seems to have hollowed out the former for itself. Such a volume of water pouring rapidly and continuously into the great basin below, naturally makes a way corresponding to the force which it possesses. Hence, the cavity which receives the two cataracts is of immense depth. To the bottom of this great basin, the waters descend directly by their own weight. The current flows beneath for about two miles, and then rising to the surface, it disturbs the

calm which made the river passable at the ferry.

From this point, the turbulence of the stream continues steadily to increase. The former turmoil of the waters above the falls is repeated, though within narrower limits. A rocky bed, which descends and contracts with great rapidity, adds to the general agitation. Once more the stream is marked by drifting currents, swift and strong; while the white foam breaks again upon the rushing torrent. For about a mile, this state of things continues. *The Rapids below the falls* then reach their climax, and are over.

After two miles of steady flow, and one mile of rapids, the river encounters a bed of rock, lying across its channel. This obstacle gives rise to a new phase in Niagara's course. The stream is compelled to turn sharply to the right at the narrowest point in its course. In doing so, the bank on its left has been scooped out, so as to

form a circular basin. This makes a deep, dark pool, in which the water is remarkably calm by the side of a terrific current which forms it. The stream there, rushes in great force and volume; and being hindered in its direct flow, it throws up its waters in the middle, to a height of ten feet above the sides. The effect of those violently eddying currents is such, that anything carried down to the pool, is often held for a long time there. This dangerous place is the *Whirlpool* of Niagara.

The banks on each side are steep and rocky; and as the tumultuous waters rapidly bend round from the whirlpool, they seem in haste to be gone. After this, the river flows on in a pretty even course to its destined home in the lake beyond. Its depth is very great, varying from one hundred feet to a hundred and fifty. From the falls to a point seven miles down the river, the descent of the channel is one hundred and four feet; while

for the next eight miles, the bed descends only two. For that distance, therefore, Niagara is again navigable. Pursuing an even course, it becomes again useful to man; and shortly afterwards, loses itself in Lake Ontario.

The length of the stream is sometimes given as thirty-four miles, and sometimes thirty-six. For that distance then, Niagara carries down to Lake Ontario, the waters of Lake Erie. The whole incline of its channel is about three hundred and thirty-four feet. No wonder then its waters are anything but quiet, as they pass down such an incline, as well as descending with one bold leap the sudden gap in their way.

Looking on the rapids below the falls, one would think it impossible for boat, vessel, or craft of any kind to ride those rough waters in safety. Only one little steamer has ever been known to make the attempt; and to the surprise of all, it survived those awful currents. It was

a terrible risk to run, and the marvel is, that it was not dashed to pieces by the rapids, or dragged down by the eddies of the whirlpool. This steamer was "The Maid of the Mist," which for some time had been daily plying up and down the water, from the ferry to near the spray of the falls. The little craft was built by the river-side, and had crossed and re-crossed many a time, where only small boats do now. Its owner had got into debt, and the sheriff was about to claim the steamer. To avoid its capture, was now the object to be attained. "The Maid of the Mist" could not leave the water to evade the grasp of the law, for its place was between the cataract and the rapids below. But its owner was desperate; and rather than allow it to be taken from him, he conceived the idea of sending it down the rapids to the lower part of the river. It is said that the captain was accompanied by two men the day he determined to make the wild

attempt. One stood by him at the wheel, and the other kept to his engine. The usual route for "The Maid" was to go up near the falls, and this it did on that memorable day. Then suddenly turning the little steamer, that daring man made straight for the rapids, or rather for the river below, which could only thus be reached.

As those awful currents were thus encountered, the frail craft was entirely at their mercy. At one moment it was leaping over the foaming rapids, irresistibly carried by the current. At another, the wild waters were sweeping over it, and the funnel was thrown flat on the deck. Then rising again, "The Maid" was seen skimming the surface of those terrific waters, and into the comparative quiet of the whirlpool. Even that dread spot did not detain the little vessel; but turning sharply with the river, it sped on its way down the stream. Lake Ontario was reached, no lives lost, the vessel sold (it is

said), and the law evaded. I was told that the captain did this for money, and lost his reason by it, so great was the strain upon him.

The human heart will brave a great deal to gain the end it has in view ; and yet how careless, how heedless does it often shew itself about the true riches ! The steamer of which I have told you, was in danger of the law, and doomed because its owner had failed to meet its requirements. Is not the sinner as truly condemned because of a broken law ? “ Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all,” are words written for us by the Holy Ghost. It is not escape from legal claims that the sinner needs, for that is not possible any more than just. God says “ They shall not escape,” when speaking of such as shall neglect salvation. What the sinner needs, is, that One should meet the penalty of the broken law in his stead. The sinner’s death will not atone, for that he deserves for

himself. But the death of one holy Man has been accepted by our God, who is holy, just, and good. The proof of this is, that He has raised Him from the dead. So the believer can say with Paul, that the Lord Jesus "was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." Can the reader of these pages say likewise?

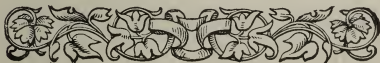
Supposing some one had come forward for this American debtor, and said, "I will pay his debts." If such an offer had been made and accepted, the sheriff would no longer have claimed the vessel, for justice would have been satisfied. God is satisfied with the atoning work of His Son, the perfect, sinless Man, Christ Jesus; and that is enough to meet the need of every sinner who desires salvation. Listen to the fulness of the gospel invitation as given by Paul in the synagogue at Antioch. "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins;

and by him all that believe, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

"Free from the law, oh, happy condition !
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission ;
Cursed by the law, and bruised by the fall,
Grace hath redeem'd us, once for all.


Now are we free—there's no condemnation ;
Jesus provides a perfect salvation ;
' Come unto *Me*, ' oh, hear His sweet call !
Come and He saves us, once for all.

' Children of God ! ' oh, glorious calling,
Surely His grace will keep us from falling
Passing from death to life at His call !
Blessèd salvation, once for all."



CHAPTER IX.

THE CANADIAN SIDE OF THE FALLS.

HE Horse Shoe fall has been touched upon, as seen from its inner edge towards Goat Island. But a better standpoint whence to see the great cataract, is from the Canadian shore, which forms the opposite edge of the Horse Shoe. As on Iris Island, the waters also fall over the ledge on the Canadian side, close by one's feet. The flat shore, the shallow water, and the curved rock, all combine to give a safe and firm foothold close to the water's edge. Such is one's position on the upper bank of the stream where it falls. But the same spot is one hundred and fifty feet above the water after it falls. It thus forms a flat shore for the waters above, and a steep rocky bank for the river below.

Standing on this spot with one's back to Canada, the chasm into which Niagara's stream is falling, lies in front. Opposite may be seen the rocky side of Goat Island and the American fall. To the left, the re-united river is hurrying on to the rapids, and the whirlpool. On the right is the Horse Shoe with its rapids, and in the distance, the islands of that part of the river. Two miles up the western bank, may be seen what is called the *Burning Spring*. The water in this is warm, and charged with gas. When a barrel has been placed over an opening in the spring, and a light applied, this gas burnt with a brilliant flame.

But now from the edge of the Horse Shoe on the Canadian shore, let us look up the river, and thus face the mighty cataract. The whole body of falling water is full in view, curving round to the left from the edge where one may stand. As it approaches the great precipice, its colour is of

the most lovely green. Even where dashed about in the rapids, those deep clear waters are of an emerald hue, varied by the white of the snowy spray. Whether glittering under a cloudless sky, or gleaming in the soft light of sunset, Niagara's waters are beautiful in the extreme. The Horse Shoe fall is particularly remarkable for its emerald green, because it carries more water than the other part of the river. The greater the volume, the more distinct the colour, and the more striking the effect.

The Canadian side of the river narrows to a little over a third of a mile, after a course of over twenty miles from Lake Erie. There is therefore an immense body of water contracted to a comparatively narrow space. But to gaze upon that rushing flood, as it leaps over a ledge of rock with one tremendous bound, makes the width seem enormous. It is simply impossible to give any idea of the majesty of this wonderful cataract,

but of the most imperfect kind. Imagine between six and seven hundred thousand tons of water pouring every minute over that curved-shaped ledge! This is considered to be about the quantity from the two falls, though it is impossible to be exact in such a statement.

As the water approaches the ledge over which it is so soon to bound, looking, as has been said "like a bank of emeralds," its majesty is overwhelming. The noble river advancing in triumphant beauty, leaps the precipitous height, and may be seen thus falling to a depth of one hundred and fifty feet. Deeper you cannot see, but down, down beneath the depths of those rolling, heaving waters, rushes that weighty, liquid mass. The depth of water as it bends over the ledge on its downward course, must be at least twenty feet. In 1829, a ship which had been condemned on one of the lakes above, was drifted down the river to the cataract. The vessel was

eighteen feet deep in the stream, yet its keel did not touch the edge of the rock as it dashed downwards. Its name was "The Detroit." Its last moments were thus useful in giving a proof of the water's depth.

Fort Schlosser is on the Canadian side, nearly opposite Gull Island. There, in time of war, a British officer set fire to the American steamboat "Caroline," and sent it onwards to the Canadian fall. This happened not many years after the incident of the "Detroit;" but the circumstances of each were different.

From that same bank of the river, a canal has been formed, connecting the water as it leaves Lake Erie with the navigable part towards the end of its course. Thus Niagara's waters, diverted a little, make navigation possible between the two lakes. This could not be by the natural stream.

Many have thought, as they looked on the

dashing waters coming towards the falls, that they appeared struggling against an awful fate. They rise and fall like crested waves, as if holding back from the tremendous leap to be shortly taken. Yet still onwards they rush in foaming rapids; and to stop on their downward course is simply impossible. So they eddy and whirl, and rise and fall, as they lash themselves into snow-white foam; but stay, they must not, cannot. Then a calm ensues, and the deep green waters approach—an instant more, and with one mighty bound they are in the depths, far below the reach of the eye of man.

The descent of such a mighty volume down, down, down, far below the surface of the water into which it falls, is a thing to be heard as well as seen. The sound is like the roar and majesty of thunder, yet soft and melodious to the ear. One loves to linger within “the sound of many waters;” while the heart is bowed, and the soul

is awed with the grand sublimity of the scene. The distance at which the falls may be heard, varies naturally with the condition of the air, and direction of the wind. The roar is said to have been heard at Toronto, which is forty-four miles off. If this was the case, it would be but on rare occasions probably. Lockport is twenty-one miles from Niagara town, and there this thunder of waters can be heard. That depends, however, altogether on the state of the atmosphere.

I was afterwards staying for some weeks at a country place, twelve miles off, and there could hear the sound, and see the spray like a cloud in the distance.

Varied are the feelings of on-lookers, and as varied are the lessons to be learned at Niagara. A friend of mine wrote a poem, called "The Song of the Rapids," after seeing the river. An extract here and there will shew what the waters seemed

to say to her as they approached the ledge, and made the mighty plunge.

“ Smooth and swiftly on we sweep,
Nothing now to check our leap ;
One triumphant plunge, and then
Gladly we shall rise again :
Then the mystery we shall know,
Of the unfathomed deep below ;
Nay, we need not end our life
’Mid the turmoil and the strife :
Overhead the rainbow wreath
Tells of life, and not of death ;
Lo, the thunder voice ye hear
Tells of triumph, not of fear ;
While the spray clouds that ye see,
Wave a sign of victory.
They are rising, we shall rise,
Some to glow in sunset skies,
Thence to fall in welcome showers,
Till the earth laughs back in flowers.
We—to fuller life we pass,
See that lake like molten glass !
In its calmness we shall share,
Peace and rest await us there ;
We shall shine where sunlight smiles,
Glorious round the ‘ Thousand Isles.’

Farther yet—the shores are gone,
Yet we still are sweeping on,
Onward to the boundless sea,
Where the song of victory
Murmured on the river shore,
Swells the mighty ocean's roar.
Songs of union as we meet,
Oh how sweet, how passing sweet !
Rock and shore awhile may part,
There we mingle heart to heart.

* * *

Not a thought of death or sleep
In the cataract's downward sweep ;
Resurrection was the word
In Niagara's thunders heard ;
One, unseen, beside us stood,
Mightier than the mighty flood ;
He who brought from death's dark night
Immortality to light—
Jesus, who for sinners died—
Jesus risen, glorified !
Lo ! His voice above its strife
Said, I give eternal life.”






View on an American river.

CHAPTER X.

THE RISING SPRAY CLOUD.

HE Christian lady who wrote the verses just quoted, saw in the rising spray, a fit emblem of resurrection. And truly if the cataract in its downward leap be taken as an illustration of death, the water, coming up again in a new form, would be like life from the dead. White as driven snow, it rises from the chasms beneath in stainless beauty. For the mighty cataract lashes the fallen waters into a mass of moving foam, scattering hither and thither the spotless spray. Then like a soft and gentle cloud it soars upward, to hover over the tumultuous scene for a little, only to pass from

earth to the regions above. There, higher than the turmoil, and gathered with the clouds which have gone before, it finds a fitting and a useful place. For the waters which have gone up in vapour from all parts of the earth, only return in refreshing showers in time of need.

When the clouds give forth rain, the soil receives it; and vegetation is thereby refreshed. And so the very verdure around us is chiefly dependent upon the clouds, and the welcome rain which they give forth. Thus Niagara's snow-white spray is not lost to earth when it soars upwards; for it will return again in blessing to the scene which it has left. Not to the same spot, possibly, but our globe will benefit by it in some way or other. In the "Song of the Rapids," the earth is said to "laugh back in flowers," because the smiling fruitfulness of the soil depends on moisture to call it forth. So air, and earth, and water, all combine to make our

terrestrial home suited to the need of those who dwell there.

The spray, as it rises from Niagara's cataract, may be seen miles away, like a white cloud on the horizon. A pretty and effective guide it would be for a lost traveller, in the days when America was less populated than now. The spray cloud to sight, and the sound of many waters to the ear, make the position of Niagara known even while it is afar off in the distance.

Many an eye which has gazed upon that scene, has long since closed in death; and ears which have listened to those thundering waters, shall hear them no more. This generation will pass, and another take its place; but still the river will probably roll on, and other feet probably tread its banks. Where shall you be then, dear reader? and what lies in future for you? All life is uncertain, and everything on earth is unsatisfying;

but all that is of God in your life and mine, will continue beyond the limits of time.

Are you in Christ? then He will be your happy portion for ever, and death will have no terror for you. Are you young? then are you most highly privileged to have a Saviour offered in youth. But are you His? To hear of Christ, and to know Him personally as your Redeemer, are two very different things. As the believer thinks of death it need never sadden his spirit; for beyond is that day of glory (if it come not before) when he shall rise in blessed resurrection life, to be for ever with the Lord. But for the poor unsaved sinner passing on to the tomb, there remains nothing but "a certain, fearful looking for judgment, and a fiery indignation," if he will not have God's Christ, the sinner's Saviour. Let the river then roll on with its lesson of death, and let us learn from its passing waters as we speed onwards too. Centuries may witness great

changes in its bed and banks ; but still the wide waters will find an onward path for themselves in their journey to the ocean.

Water has great power of forming caves, and causing other changes in the rocks of a country. In the case of Niagara, it has shaped the curved ledge with its falling waters, and done much to hollow out for itself the channel below. So powerful is the wear of the cataract, that the broken bed of the stream is constantly being worn away. Some state that this is to the extent of a foot in the year, others say it is at the rate of three. Be that as it may, the ledge is constantly receding, and perhaps not everywhere alike. The consequence is, that the shape of the falls is continually altering. The Canadian cataract is much less curved than it once was ; so that the horse-shoe shape was then more distinctly seen than is now the case.

It is a striking and well-known fact, that as time goes on, there must be other changes in Niagara. However, the number of years would be so great, that the world may not last long enough to see them. For instance, the receding of the river sufficiently far back to permit of its sweeping over Goat Island, would take thousands of years. Yet, if it were possible for the world to go on till it did so, there would then be one wild waste of waters, making an even cataract of enormous width.

I never saw Niagara in winter, but I have been told that it forms a very striking scene. In Canada, the snow does not melt and pass away as quickly as it does in England. It often lies there the whole of the winter; and one storm succeeds another, till the snow lies deep and hard on every side. In severe winters, the ground is not seen for six months. The sky is blue, the air is clear, and the hard frosts make the surface

of small lakes and rivers into ordinary highways, by a thick coating of ice.

With such snowy surroundings, the river possesses a new beauty, though its grand old waters are still the same. From bank, and bush, and rock, the glittering icicles hang; while every tree and spreading branch is clad in purest white. On such a scene the sky is cloudless, and the sun's rays fall with a brightness unknown in summer. For snow and ice is everywhere, and the eye is dazzled by the excessive brilliancy which is to be seen on every hand. Above, below, around, one unshaded scene of beauty meets the sight.

My last view of Niagara was by moonlight, and it was not the least lovely of all. I had looked on those emerald waters in the glare of a noon-day sun. I had gazed upon them in sunset beauty, and once more I saw them in a still softer light. The calm, peaceful moon looked down

upon the wild waters, which glistened under her gentle rays, as they dashed on their way. The dark shadows cast here, and the bright reflection of the moonbeams there, gave an awe-inspiring character to the scene, which I have never forgotten. And as I turned my back upon those rushing, sparkling waters, it was with the sight deeply impressed upon my memory, for some profitable purpose, I trust.

As the sound lingered in my ear for miles after the river was out of sight, I thought of a fairer and brighter scene, ever before me, and never behind. Earth's fairest and brightest spots have to be left in the distance, as we pass onwards in the stream of time. The joys which we have here below, are fleeting and short lived; and so are the things which delight the natural eye. The eye of faith in the child of God, looks on to that moment when the coming glory will far eclipse everything of time. Still as we gaze on

the mighty wonders of earth, let it be with adoring gratitude to the Giver of all good, for the beautiful world in which He has placed us. And let us never forget that it is through Christ, every blessing comes. Our object must be the Christ of God, if the work of His hands is to have its right place before us. We need not go here, or go there, to see this or that; but in that which God brings before us, let our hearts praise Him, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

The following verses, by Mrs. H. Bonar, very aptly express how far inferior are the most pleasing things of earth, to the pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore.

“ Pass away, earthly joy,
 Jesus is mine !
Break every mortal tie,
 Jesus is mine !
Dark is the wilderness,
Distant the resting-place ;
Jesus alone can bless ;
 Jesus is mine !

“ Fare ye well, dreams of night,
 Jesus is mine !
Mine is a dawning bright,
 Jesus is mine !
All that my soul hath tried
Left but a dismal void ;
Jesus has satisfied ;
 Jesus is mine !

“ Farewell, mortality,
 Jesus is mine !
Welcome, eternity,
 Jesus is mine !
Welcome, a Saviour's breast,
Welcome, ye scenes of rest,
Welcome, ye mansions blest ;
 Jesus is mine !”





Battle near Fort Niagara.

CHAPTER XI.

FORT NIAGARA.

FORT Niagara, as its name implies, was built as a place of defence in the time of war. It was one of a line of forts along the great chain of waters, which divides the United States of America from Canada. This fortress occupied a very important position, as it commanded the country lying between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. Its situation is at the south-east end of the latter, where the river Niagara enters it.

The French knew the importance of Fort Niagara, and were, naturally, most unwilling to give it up into the hands of the English. The former carried on an extensive trade in furs with

the wild Indians of the west, which would be materially affected by the retention, or loss of this fortress. The French owned a considerable part of Canada, having begun to colonise it in 1604. This was not much over a hundred years after its discovery by Cabot, in 1497. Different parts had been taken and given back, for, during some years, an attempt was being made by the English, to gain possession. At last, England and France decided the question of their respective limits in the new country, and matters were nominally settled.

The English, however, were not satisfied ; and while arrangements were thus being made at home their adventurers were busy in America. New parts of the country were being explored, and the friendship and good will of many Indian tribes, were sought and obtained. This paved the way for many of these afterwards becoming allies to the English, when war had actually begun.

England and France were not on good terms ; and though neither declared war, both were preparing. When it did break out, the French had Indian allies from those over whom they had influence, while the English had theirs. The original inhabitants were thus on the respective sides of the two conquering nations.

When the war began, the English went from one fortress to another, to plant the British flag. Embarking at the eastern end of Lake Ontario, a number of English troops made their way to Fort Niagara. It was quickly, and easily taken possession of ; but a French commander hurriedly gathered together twelve hundred men, and advanced against the fortress. By the time the fort was reached, the army numbered seventeen thousand. Part of these were savages, while others were Europeans ; and the remainder were people who dwelt in the provinces of Canada.

The Mohawks who were on the English side,

made signs to the Indian allies of the French, that they desired to talk peaceably over matters. This was not agreed to by their enemies, and then the war-whoop was raised by the Mohawks. The opposing Indians answered with savage cries and yells, and the battle began forthwith. What with the clang of arms, the noise of artillery, and the savage shouts of the Indians on both sides, the noise was terrific. The battle was short, but the scene was frightful in the extreme. In one hour, the assailants were flying in great confusion, and the English followed after them to the woods beyond.

The French general and officers were taken prisoners; while the dead and wounded were seen on every side. Even the neighbouring forests for miles were strewn with the bodies of the dead and dying. The following day witnessed the surrender of the French garrison; and over Fort Niagara triumphantly waved the British flag.

The soldiers were safely escorted to Quebec, for the Indians on the English side were as savage as those on the French; and it would have been terrible to fall into their hands. While the garrison were thus left as prisoners, the sick and wounded who remained were kindly treated. The women and children asked to be sent to Montreal, and their request was humanely granted.

The English commander was Sir William Johnson. He seemed to have great influence over the savage Indians, so they were kept from their usual cruel ways in war. Eleven hundred of these barbarous men fought under him at Fort Niagara. From this point, the English proceeded to take the other forts, leading on to Lake Erie; but we have no interest in following them further at the present time.

Thus the country on Niagara's banks, has been the scene of much bloodshed; but happily, those

dread days are over. There is a little stream falling into the river, which has received the name of *Bloody Run*, because of the scenes of war enacted there. Now, happily, these fighting days have ceased, and peace and plenty fill the land, instead of war and bloodshed. How varied are the scenes witnessed in the same place, as years roll on! And what thankfulness to God should there be in our hearts, that our lot is cast in a land of peace and liberty.

Scripture speaks of peace being as “a river,” and righteousness as “the waves of the sea.” This would have been the portion of the nation of Israel, if the people had been obedient to God. And so it is with us still; for what gives more unrest and lack of peace, than the restless working of the will of man! Oh, it is well when the soul learns how utterly corrupt and hateful is the evil heart of unbelief, that “departs from the living God!” Then learning that we

are vile, we thankfully turn to Jesus, who saves His people from their sins. Sin was met by the death of Christ, and my sins may now be forgiven, because that precious blood has paid the penalty.

Can my young readers echo these thoughts, and say "my sins are forgiven," and "that blood shed for *me*"? If so, then walk in obedience to a holy God; and like the noble flowing river, your heart will be the scene of a constant inflow of perfect peace. And not only peace, but love; "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Thus in peace and love, and cheered by the sweet company of the divine Comforter, the believer may joyfully pass on to eternal joy and glory.

Let the river bring before your youthful mind, rich thoughts of the constant and never-ending grace of God, flowing so full and free; and then the story of Niagara will not have been written in vain. The streams of God's grace

are ever flowing, and sinners are the objects of that grace, simply because God delights to bless. And not only the sinner, but the whole earth will yet enjoy a fulness of blessing from on high, such as it has never before known. For when the Lord of glory comes with ten thousand of saints, as prophesied by Enoch, He will begin a reign of righteousness and peace, which has never hitherto been seen on earth. When He comes, "whose right it is to reign," all creation shall "share in the divine blessing." The following lines from the pen of one now with the Lord, point onwards to that glad and happy day. Then the presence of Christ shall chase away every sorrow, and He too will joy over His people with singing; while His love and His blessing will be for ever and ever.

"Praise, praise ye the Lamb, who for sinners was slain,
Who went down to the grave and ascended again ;
And who soon shall return when these dark days are o'er,
To set up His kingdom in glory and power.

For His love floweth on, free and full as a river,
And His mercy endureth for ever and ever.

Then the heavens, and the earth, and the seas shall rejoice,
The field and the forest shall lift the glad voice ;
The sands of the desert shall flourish in green,
And Lebanon's glory be shed o'er the scene.

For His love floweth on, free and full as a river,
And His mercy endureth for ever and ever.

Her bridal attire, and her festal array,
All nature shall wear on that glorious day ;
For the King cometh down, o'er His people to reign,
And His presence shall bless her with Eden again.

For His love floweth on, free and full as a river,
And His mercy endureth for ever and ever."



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